

**Remarks of Congressman Bobby Scott**  
**Democratic Whip's Hearing on the *American Health Care Act***  
**HVC-215**  
**Thursday, March 16th**  
**9:30am-12:00pm**

Thank you, Steny, and thank you for convening this hearing that should've taken place a long time ago.

As we talk about the Affordable Care Act, I think it's important to remind ourselves what the situation was before we passed the Affordable Care Act. Costs we're going through the roof, those with pre-existing conditions could not get insurance, women were paying more than men, and every year millions of people were losing their insurance.

Then, we passed the Affordable Care Act. Costs have continued to go up, but at the lowest rate in 50 years. Those with pre-existing conditions can get insurance at the standard rate, women are no longer paying more

than men, and instead of millions of people losing insurance every year, more than 20 million people now have insurance.

The full name of the Affordable Care Act was the *Patient Protection* and Affordable Care Act and so now there a host of patient protections as well. Your coverage can't be canceled if your insurance company decides that it's paid too much. Preventive services, such as cancer screenings, are free, with no co-pays or deductibles. We also are closing the donut hole. Those under 26 can stay on a parent's policy. We funded community health centers; we made investments in education so we can produce more doctors, nurses, and other professionals. Through all that, the Medicare trust fund solvency was improved.

Still the law is not perfect, but if we're going to make a change we should improve the situation and not make it worse. Incredibly, every proposal the Republicans have come up with actually makes things worse, especially their replacement plan.

Now, the CBO has confirmed what we already knew – fewer people will be covered and everybody else will pay more and get less. You can't cure that problem. You can't fix it by saying that someone that's now paying just \$100 a month – mandated to purchase insurance – whose policy would be \$1000 under their plan, has the freedom to be uninsured. We have to recognize the problem for what it is. All the while, their plan inflicts pain on people while the top 2% get massive tax cuts.

All of those consequences occur if the proposal works. CBO talks about stability – well, we have the Insurance Commissioner of Washington State here who can discuss what happened in Washington when they tried to cover people with pre-existing conditions without universal coverage.

So with that, I want to turn it over to our experts and introduce our first panel of witnesses who will focus on the economic and coverage implications of the Republicans' plan.